GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2241
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2007
RURAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY NETWORK
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal for setting up of Rural Information Technology Network in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any problem has cropped in the first phase of the new projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY(DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) and (b): No. Sir. However, the Government has recently approved a Scheme for providing support for establishing 100,000 broadband, Internet enabled, Common Service Centres (CSCs) in rural areas of the country. These Centres would be opened in the ratio of 1 CSC for every 6 Census villages in a State. These Centres would provide a mix of Government and private Services in rural areas. While the State Government would decide the exact nature of Government services to be provided, the nature of private services to be provided would be determined by the entity selected for establishing the CSCs. It is expected that non government services like computer education, agriculture consulting, insurance, edutainment etc. would be delivered through these centres. The Scheme is to be implemented in a public private partnership. The full details of the Scheme are available in the CSC guidelines which are accessible at www.mit.gov.in . The total outlay of the Scheme is Rs 5742 crores , including the cost of establishment of the CSCs and their operation for four years thereafter. The Government support in the form of viability gap funding is estimated to be Rs 1649 crores, with the balance coming from private sector investments. These centres would thus be available for a variety of uses in rural areas including computer education, raising awareness about IT in rural areas etc. The Scheme is currently under implementation.

(c) and (d): No significant problems have cropped up in the implementation of the Scheme. However it may be mentioned that since the implementation of the CSC Scheme is being carried out by the State Governments, the speed of implementation of the Scheme is dependent on the initiative and interest shown by the States in implementing the Scheme.